The ROUND ROBIN

A Bulletin of Contact and Information for Students of Psychic Research and Parapsychology.

Published by N. Meade Layne, M.A.
Three-Six-One-Five Alexia Place,
SAN DIEGO, 4, California.

The ROUND ROBIN
Vol. 1, No. 3
April 1945

A Bulletin of Contact and Information
for Students of Psychic Research and
Parapsychology.

Published by N. Meade Layne, M.A.
Three-Six-One-Five Alexia Place
SAN DIEGO, 4, California

TABLE OF CONTENTS

So.What?! . . . . . page. . . .1
Excursus.Psychologicus . . . . . page. . . .2
Pathways through Space . . . . . page. . . .2
VITIC AGAIN. . . . . pages. . 3/5
Forest Fires. . . . . page. . . .5
Tares and Thistles . . . . . page. . . .6
Giants in Dressing Gowns . . . . . page. . . .6
1944 Weather . . . . . page. . . .6
Earthquake. . . . . pages. . 6/7
Hatha Yoga . . . . . page. . . .7
Some Postulates of Occultism . . . . . page. . . .8
House of Mystery. . . . . page. . . .9
Tough Prospect . . . . . page. . . .9
ST. ODILE . . . . . page. . . .9
Concerning Psycho-Physical Theories . . . . . page . . .10
Journal of the ASPR for April. . . . . page . . .11

Simple.Simon.Hears Things. . . . . .pages 12/13
Good Company. . . . . .page . . .13
A Word for Our Spiritualist Friends. . . . . .page . . .14

* * *

[1]

- SO WHAT ? -

ES, WE KNOW that any good stage "magician", given his own conditions, can reproduce by his legitimate trickery all kinds of spiritistic and seance phenomena, in their outward appearance.

> (But Jastrow, famous scholar, has the stupidity to put this forward as an argument per contre, in Baldwin's Encyclopedia of Philosophy and Psychology)

We know there are frauds and liars among mediums, psychics, clairvoyants, and that the history of spiritualism is in many ways very discreditable

> (But it's hardly as ignorant, stupid, malicious and bigoted as the record of "investigation" by official "science" during the last 100 years or so)

We know some very smart investigators have been made fools of by smarter crooks, or have made fools of themselves in e sense both pro and contra, in spiritistic matters.

We know that people in all walks of life, all professions and occupations, are spiritualists, or hate spiritualism, or are afraid of it, or know nothing about it and care less -- and that you can collect "evidence" and "authorities" for and against anything, ad nauseam.

We know that personal, individual, non-demonstrable experiences are not **FACTS** in the eye of science -- and also, that no sceptic, scientist or otherwise, ever doubted the "reality" of his own stomach ache, even if he couldn't "prove" that he had one.

(For that matter, about 3/4 or 4/5 of our mental life is personal, undemonstrable, non-provable, non-scientific)

We know there has been as much (nearly as much, anyhow) quackery and delusion and commercialism in spiritism, as in any other of the 190 religious denominations listed in our trusty Handbook -- so that nobody has had a monopoly on humbug so far.

We know about and have met any number of people who think all study of things "psychical", spiritistic, supernormal, metapsychological, is a waste of time, or endangers the soul, or is a mere fad and stick-whittling. They're for throwing out baby, bathwater and bath tub all together and settling down to something "useful".

There's little to be done for such people, except to wait for them to grow up.

We know we could go on writing "we know", always with a **SO WHAT?** after it, right down to the last date page of our Christmas-present diary -- making concessions to prejudice and obscurantism and pseudo-science and plain ignorance-and-cussedness -- but what would be the use of it?

It's the objectors with no objection, critics with no real criticism, road-blockers instead of bridge-builders that we're talking about. And **SO WHAT?** is about the only retort one has time for.

* * *

EXCURSUS PSYCHOLOGICUS: [2]

Psychology, according to James, is an account of particular finite streams of thought, coexisting and succeeding in time. For a "soul" as a substantive entity, something in which the thinking takes place, he finds no use. This view is representative of a large body of psychological thinking.

Scholasticism, "common sense", transcendentalism, Kantians, Hegelians have it otherwise. The "soul" is a substantive Somewhat that thinks. (The relation of this thinking to the brain processes is a different and highly involved problem).

In spiritualism (meaning the religious belief) "soul" sometimes means the spirit-body, that is, the material form in which the discarnate spirit resides. Sometimes it refers to the two-in-one, or the spirit-in-body.

Illuminism (occultism, esotericism) thinks of the soul as the personalized expression of the Ego -- not the Ego of the Freudians, of course, nor of a common usage of the word, but of a higher consciousness, or individuality, which is an emanation of the Monad or Divine Spark.

From one point of view, spiritualism is a thoroughly materialistic doctrine, for it does not conceive of any level of consciousness (personality, individuality, or even the Ego) as divorced from a "material" vehicle. This "material", of course, does not mean the dense matter of our earth plane.

It is easy to see why psychology, as a "natural science", can have little to do with metaphysical speculation. It can make nothing intelligible and profitable out of occult and mystical experience. That fact, however, merely defines its own province of operation.

* * *

PATHWAYS THROUGH TO SPACE. A Personal Record of Transformation in Consciousness. Franklin Merrell-Wolfe. Pub. by Richard R. Smith, N.Y., 1944 ($3.00).

The author is said to be a mathematician and scientist, and the book gives evidence of much philosophical knowledge as well.

Though there is extensive background in Indian metaphysics, the author himself did not follow any of the traditional techniques; one of his most interesting insistences is that "our present physical science is unfolding a peculiarly beautiful Path to Yoga."

Yet even this knowledge, of the concepts of speculative science, is not necessary, for it is possible for each of us to find his own road, once certain basic ideas are understood. The goal, of course, is Recognition, Illumination, the Higher Consciousness. It is what the Western Occultist would call the Knowledge and the Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel -- and yet, in the Beyond-Nirvana, perhaps something higher still.

A book for the mental adult, and much too important to be neglected.

- - VITIC AGAIN - -

[3]

In the March issue of the Round Robin, there was an article called "Carbon Force, or Vitic." (../n02/index.html#Vitic) Vitic is a kind of catch-name given to a force or energy released by hard carbon when held in the hand, in conjunction with a permanent magnet, and which is apparently stored in the nerve centers, and affects the normal deflection of the galvanometer. The Editor of the R-R wrote this up in the "Fortean" several months ago, and the matter attracted the attention (among others) of Mr E. C. Krieger, an ordnance engineer in Indiana. Mr. Krieger has been working at the problem as his time permitted, and we now have the privilege of printing a communication from him.

Several other readers of the R-R have expressed an interest in this same matter, and we call their attention to Mr Krieger's notes as being highly suggestive. As he himself points out, they are not intended to be more than this -- but it is from hints and suggestions that most scientific knowledge is developed. We would greatly like to have the cooperation of other investigators, if only in the matter of statistics on the step-up of deflections; please see our note at the end of this article. But for the present, here are our

MEMORANDA FROM MR KRIEGER

The following is not intended as a theory for VITIC. Rather it is presented in the hope that it may suggest lines of investigation for those who have the urge, and facilities, in the hope that a phrase or sentence may "click" in someone's mind and have a significant association with some other piece of seemingly irrelevant data.

Lacking the original literature, the identities of materials that were examined and discarded are not known, nor are the types of instruments used and the comparative results known. The latter is important because force or energy yields different effects with different materials, or different instruments. A piece of wood

does not noticeably respond to a magnetic field. The effect of the carbon force is measured second handedly by the physiological responses of the human body as indicated by an electrical galvanometer. There may be other reactions released by other materials, or other mechanisms which may yield greater relative responses.

Carbon has two crystalline forms, that of graphite and that of the diamond. In the form used it is amorphous. It is also dia-magnetic - it moves away from a magnetic pole or field. Other diamagnetics are known: Copper, Lead, Silver, Mercury, Gold, Antimony, and most strongly, Bismuth. The list is not complete; for instance, blood is diamagnetic. With the exception of Mercury, these elements are crystalline. A significant experiment would be to check galvanometric readings before and after placing the right hand in a dish of Mercury. There is the thought that crystalline boundaries usually inhibit the transfer of energy. Comparative checks of these diamagnetics should be made, their amorphous forms as well.

Paramagnetic materials move toward a magnetic pole or field: Iron, Aluminum, Cobalt, Nickel, and others. The fast three are very much less paramagnetic than iron, yet, by alloying, these three form a permanent magnet capable of sustaining 4,000 times its own weight, far superior to iron. By analogy the example may be extended to diamagnetics.

Consider this : a common force, "electricity", has two entirely different effects the nature of which depends upon the material used for its detection. But there are other forms of electricity, each of which is likely to have separate responses for varying materials. A great deal of descriptive data has been accumulated about the inter-relation of electricity and paramagnetic materials: Motors, relays, induction and motive mechanisms of all sorts. Supposing paramagnetics had not been known, only diamagnetics ....

[4]

Other comments are that diamagnetic - Copper, Silver, and Gold - are increasingly so in the order named -- and are increasingly better electrical conductors in the order named. The resistance or "opaqueness" of metals to electrical energy has an effect - heat. The relatively most diamagnetics Antimony and Bismuth used together with a common force -heat- have an effect: electricity. Antimony and Bismuth form a very good thermocouple.

A comparative study of the periodic Table shows that though Carbon and Lead are in Group IV, intermediate elements Silicon and Tin are practically neutral while Titanium is paramagnetic. It would seem that elements have magnetic

properties related horizontally and not vertically. A statement not as yet checked is that all the Group V elements, with five electrons in the outer ring, are diamagnetic. The thought is that when a number of magnetic poles are influenced by a stronger, common pole, they set up in concentric circle with a varying number in the center. There can be no more than five poles in an uncompleted outer ring for the excess move to the center until sufficient poles are accumulated to form a complete ring with the five already in that outer ring. Magnetic poles free to move constitute a magnetic current as electric poles -electrons- then moving constitute an electric current.

Properties of a magnetic current have been described by all electrical books, but not only in relation to electronic phenomena. Properties not readily deducible from the action of electric motors and solenoids are another story.

The energies of the human body register weakly on instruments designed around the use of electric current. They may register not so weakly on other instruments.

To end: all forces and energies are essentially but different forms of one energy or force. Further, that those different forms do not have objective reality but come into being - have an effect - when instruments and materials designed to exhibit that effect are created and used.

(signed) E.C. KRIEGER.

To this we add the following information, also furnished by Mr Krieger. Hard gray carbon rods l in.diameter x 1 foot in length, can be obtained from the National Carbon Co., Chicago. (Arc Carbon will work and can often be had from electrical supply companies. Cut with a hacksaw. Ed.)

Sb, Bi, Cu, Pb, Si, Sn, Zn can be obtained from Belmont Smelting & Refining Works, Inc., 330 Belmont Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. Sb and Si probably only in powder or lump form.

Also, with regard to the Kilner screens, used for examining the Aura; these consisted of thin glass cells filled with an alcohol sol. of dicyanin. This chemical can be had from the Chemical Sales Div. of the Eastman Kodak Co., Rochester, 4, N.Y. at $20.00 per gram, $2.75 for 1/10 gram, sufficient for experiment. It is used for

sensitizing plates for the extreme red, is sol. in rubbing alcohol. With cellulose acetate and acetone or nitrocellulose added, could be spread as a thin coat on glass, to take place of the Kilner screen.

Kilner's book is "The Human Atmosphere" published about 1920, by Keegan Paul, 68 Carter Lane, London, E.C. 4. 10/6 probably obtainable from dealershare.

Readers not equipped for technical investigations can nevertheless help on [5] the VITIC problem, if they can obtain the use for a short time of a galvanometer sensitive enough to register a deflection when the fingers are placed on the contacts. The only other equipment is a stick of hard carbon (arc light or dry battery will do), and a small magnet or piece of magnetized steel. For details, see the March issue (../n02/index.html#Vitic) of the Round Robin, or write the Editor.

Mr. Krieger will also welcome correspondents, address him in care of the "Round Robin" for the present.

FOREST FIRES:

More than 300 of them, raged in the Lake Region of the Ozarks in central Missouri last March; burned over 600 square miles, several small communities had a tough fight of it.

Mr George White, State Forester, blames the custom of spring burning of fields. Maj. L.W. Greene, State Highway Patrol, flew over the area, says "I can't understand how so many scattered fires could start all at once. There were even fires on islands in the middle of the lake." It all happened, says the account, in the midst of a stretch of warm, windy, spring weather. (San Diego Union, March 17)

It's in windy weather, of course, that all sensible farmers go out and start fires, particularly in wooded areas! We have been taking note for years of "explanations" of fire epidemics, scores of them breaking out almost at the same time; the more we read the less convinced we are that everything is explained - or even one-third explained.

* * * * *

There is no such source of Error (says Samuel Butler) as the pursuit of Absolute Truth.

* * * * *

Said Hakeem, the Wise One: The thing that can be bought or sold has no value, unless it contains that which cannot be bought or sold.

* * * * *

The fifth century before Christ, the age of Pericles, is by us called "golden"; yet it was in this same period that Sophocles declared man's best fate would be "never to be born." This present-day lamentation of ours

> "For an old bitch gone in the teeth,
> For a botched civilization,"

is to be heard in every generation of recorded history.

* * * * *

[6]

TARES AND THISTLES

Portland, Ore., Oct. 1944.

> George Dewaide home still being pelted by rocks from nowhere. Two patrol-men, present while rocks are falling, unable to find anybody responsible. But it seems the same thing happened several months ago; police believe the "same agency" at work. Householder Dewaide getting annoyed, says it's a "job for detectives."

* * *

"GIANTS IN DRESSING GOWNS"

This is the title of a book by Julian B. Arnold, son of Edwin Arnold the poet. Included is the story of the friendship with Sir Conan Doyle, and of Doyle's study of automatic writings. About these, Doyle wrote in 1927, "You have no idea. what a concentration there is, in these automatic writings, upon this (coming) world disaster, nor how consistent the accounts are . . . I have, I should think, 50,000 words in automatic writings on this subject, extending over three years. Then I have about 60 independent testimonials of the coming of a world disaster. . .

"Time is their difficulty, but the general impression is, that it is at the end of the next decade . . . America will suffer greatly, also the Mediterranean Basin. Ireland also, but the British Isles less. But all are to catch it. Such is the general sinister scheme . . . There are to be great psychic accomplishments, and something corresponding to the Second Coming, though hardly as pictured."

Here the time element is unusually correct, as is the affliction of the Mediterranean Basin; the comparative suffering of America, Ireland and the British Isles is less accurate -- on the assumption that the predictions referred to the war only. It may be, however, that other events are involved, such as Seismic disasters, in which "all are to catch it," and which might be accompanied by the "psychic accomplishments."

* * *

1944 WEATHER:

"Things have just reversed themselves from normal," says Dr. J.B. Kincer, a division chief for the U.S. Weather Bureau. There have been "erratic mass movements of the atmosphere." In June, rainfall was 88% above annual in North Dakota, 59% above in South Dakota, 22% above in Nebraska, 10% above in Montana. There was a costly drought in Ohio, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois -- most of these states having less than 50% of normal rain. Also, excessive heat in unexpected places.

* * *

EARTHQUAKE:

Like the birth of Paricutin was the sudden earthquake, opening of "vast cracks" in the ground, loud rumblings, all of which began without warning in an Orange grove, about 55 miles from Monterrey, Mexico. Houses destroyed, trees uprooted, inhabitants terrified. [7]

* * *

Mrs. Helen Lotreck (of Mass.), musician, critic, widely informed, draws our attention to an item of interest, Byron de Prorok's chapter on Haile Selassie, in his book DEAD MEN DO TELL TALES.

According to de Prorok, Selassie is a mystic, psychic and prophet, educated in part by the Jesuits of Harrar, accustomed to spending six hours a day in prayer (prior to his exile), with an uncanny gift for prediction. In reproaching the League at Geneva for abandoning him, he said, "You will soon see the end of all the small countries of the world. In five years I shall regain my throne."

It was on the last day of the 4th year that Haile Selassie re-entered Addis Ababa.

* * *

HATHA YOGA:

This is the title of a new book by Theos Bernard, done as a PhD thesis for Columbia. The author betook himself to India, acquired a learned Guru, submitted himself to all the required physical disciplines, some of them very extraordinary.

The description does not make tasty reading, but there's a kind of unholy fascination about it. The whole account is purely factual, without reference to mystical or occult experiences, or to personal opinions of the author. Many good photographs of the asanas, a valuable bibliography of about 45 titles, and 68 pages of print. (Columbia University Press, New York, 1944)

* * *

D.C. Russell (son of "A.E.") has a book review in the N.Y. Times (Sunday magazine section), called **IN PRAISE OF M.P. SHIEL**. Mrs Lotreck mentioned this one too, and after our years of lonely enthusiasm for M.P.S. we can't pass it up.

For imaginative power and vitality and drive of style, there is little to compare with him, this side of Moby Dick at any rate. The Purple Cloud, Lord of the Seas, The Yellow Peril, How the Old Woman Got Home are perhaps the best of his stories, worth buying and keeping, if you're lucky enough to find them.

Confiteamur, there's no good reason for putting this into the Round Robin except that we want to. Primarily, this is a Psychic Research Bulletin; secondarily, however, it can be anything, and that gives us a great deal of latitude.

* * * *

And we hear that some students of the Pyramid Prophecies have moved up their dates, or moved them down; anyway, the predicted cataclysms are due this side October. Comment: no comment.

* * * * *

SOME POSTULATES OF OCCULTISM

We have no special cause to advocate in the field of Illuminism, nevertheless, there are basic ideas which to us seem only instructed commonsense. Consider for example the theory (and fact) of so-called astral projection.

To put this as simply as possible, "I am where my consciousness is" -- and this is equivalent to saying, "I am where my attention is."

The attention, the consciousness, the self, is always being "projected", always flowing out from the body, so to speak. If you watch an exciting event, an accident, a feat of skill, a contest; or when you are "absorbed" in a book or music; when you "forget yourself", "lose yourself" - - then your self, your awareness has gone elsewhere in time and space.

If I sit here and think about the next room, a part of me is there. If, for the sake of argument, I can get ALL of my consciousness into the next room, an interesting question arises - - WHERE AM I?

The control of attention is basic to all purposive action, underlies all forms of learning. The fact that attention can be trained is equally fundamental. No one can assign a limit to this possible training and control. There is abundant evidence that it can be carried to extraordinary perfection.

If ALL my attention is in the next room, or anywhere else (in the antipodes if you like), that is where "I" am, irrespective of the location of my body. Awareness, consciousness, I -- these are, for the common purposes of life, synonyms.

These facts are so obvious and commonplace, the psychology involved is so familiar that no argument about them is possible. As to empirical proof, let the doubter pay the price of knowledge. If we wish to learn something of chemistry, physics, mathematics, we do not think 5 years, or 10 or 15, too long a period of preparation. Let the "honest inquirer" work at this psychological experiment of "astral projection" for a similar period, if the desire for knowledge is real in him.

Suppose for the sake of argument, that the experiment at last succeeds. Suppose that some day the experimenter suddenly finds himself standing beside his physical body, and in full and clear consciousness. He then encounters, in full force, the "shock of brutal reality" of which YRAM speaks.

There is no more doubt for him, that existence apart from the dense body is a demonstrable and undeniable fact. How fast, from that time forward, the ten thousand follies, stupidities, scepticisms, speculations, fears, inventions of fancy, of religion, philosophy and science, piled up in ten thousand books -- how fast will all these fall away from him!

If only for five seconds or for ten this experience comes to him, he will understand that its extension in time and its elaboration in use is logically possible and depend on his own desires and efforts. Illimitable possibilities, of knowledge and experience, lie open to him.

We do not wish to speak of these matters in a mystical and esoteric manner, but completely in "cold blood, as psychological experiments, feasible, demonstrable and intensely practical, and of supreme importance.

* * *

HOUSE OF MYSTERY [9]

There was a radio broadcast about it, not long ago, and that reminds us that Ernie Pyle once wrote it up. For that matter, about once a year this mystery gets into the Press, in some form or other, without anything even approaching an explanation.

The "House" is about half-way between Grant's Pass and Medford, in southern Oregon, 4 miles off highway 99. It's an old frame building, once an assay office, and all around it, in a circle of about 125 foot diameter, the "inflexible" laws of Nature are badly twisted. Trees lean north, and so do people, though one has the sensation of standing straight, and plumb lines are off center, and bubble levels likewise. And there's an illusion that one is about six inches taller when facing north than when facing south. We call it an illusion, but it can be photographed.

A free swinging weight is harder to push one direction than another. A balanced stick (upright) leans at 7½ degrees. A ball thrown into the air, away from one, comes back instead of continuing on its course.

Distinguished scientists have been there (or so we're told), studied everything. in a distinguished manner, did a great amount of distinguished head-wagging, finally super-distinguished themselves by having nothing to say. About

once a year, some jack-ass says there's a meteorite underground, or magnetic iron ore; some people think sea-foam comes from soap-suds in the sewers.

Somebody ought to do a small book about this, collect a dozen or so super-smart physicists and put pins in their opinions, if any. Chiefly for cussedness, that is, not seeking light but to make darkness visible. Or because the knowledge of our ignorance is the beginning of wisdom.

* * *

And we hear there's another place like this House of Mystery, but piously referred to as Hell's Half Acre. It's up somewhere near Santa Clara, and if any of our readers know about it, PUH-LEASE let us hear from you.

* * *

TOUGH PROSPECT: Sir Patrick Geddes in 1907 predicted a world war in 1914 lasting 4 years, then another world war in 1940, involving the United States by 1942; so far that's first class vaticination. But he also said this second war would last until 1952!!!

* * *

ST. ODILE. Herewith an extract from the closing paragraphs of her 7th century prophecy believed by many to apply to the present war.

The third period (of the war) will be of the shortest duration, and the victor will have lost confidence in his warriors. The country of the conqueror will be invaded in all parts and laid waste. Round the mountain torrents of blood will flow. It will be the last battle. The armies of the former victor will be decimated by a great and unknown illness, and the nations will say, "The finger of God is there". Countless regions where all was fired and made bloody will be saved in a providential manner by their heroic defenders. Men will have seen such terrible abominations in this war that their generations will never desire war again.

* * * * *

** CONCERNING PSYCHO-PHYSICAL THEORIES **

Psycho-physical theories may be somewhat roughly classified under the heads of Interaction, Epiphenomenalism, and Parallelism.

According to the first of these, or INTERACTION, mind and body are considered as two separate entities, and a causal relation exists between them. Either one can affect the other. But how the will can affect the body, or in what way consciousness is related to the nervous system, remains unknown. This is the popular view, but it is also the working hypothesis of many (probably the majority) of psychologists.

EPIPHENOMENALISM holds that mental action is a by-product of the physical processes. A series of physical changes take place in the body, as a result of material causes, and mental changes occur in a corresponding sequence. Mental events do not cause each other, nor do they produce physical effects. This view is now rarely held.

PSYCHO-PHYSICAL PARALLELISM occurs under two forms. According to the first of these, mind and body are distinct entities (as in Interaction), but there is no causal relation between them. They are like two clocks set to run together, exactly adjusted to each other, but otherwise unrelated. The mental states are related causally to each other, and the body states are related to the environment; the two series are parallel and there is no cross-causation.

According to the second form of Parallelism, there is a single underlying cause for both the mental and the physical series. The theory is monistic, and metaphysical in the sense that the single cause can only be inferred, not empirically known. It is the "individual" who manifests as both body and mind, like a single clock with two dials. The real causal series is in the background, but the emphasis is on man as consciousness rather than on his physical existence.

In Interactionism we have, obviously, two kinds of energy; in Epiphenomenalism there is only one, the physical; in the first form of Parallelism there are again two kinds. In the 2nd form of Parallelism there are again two kinds. In the 2nd form of Parallelism there is a single basic energy appearing under two aspects.

* * *

Gnothi seauton, translated "know thyself" is perhaps the dullest of old saws, or the oldest of dull ones. Maybe it should translate as "know thy Self" - - which makes a world of difference to those who understand.

* * *

"Be thou free from the pairs of opposites", says the Bhagavad Gita. These are the Black and White Pillars of Masonry, of the Tarot Cards, of the Qabalistic Tree, the blossoming of the Golden Flower, the doctrine of "moderation in all things", and Gnothi Seauton! Reconciliation, balance, temperance, Self-knowledge and self mastery.

* * *

JOURNAL OF THE ASPR for April has an article by Dr. Gardner Murphy, Chairman of the Research Committee, on Difficulties Confronting the Survival Hypothesis (28 pp), a review of Carington's Theory of Paranormal Cognition by Margaret Reeves (18 pp), and a case history called A Fully Externalized Apparition, documented by Dr. Rhine. [11]

The January issue contained An Outline of Survival Evidence, also by Dr Murphy, and the present one gives the case per contra. The author is competent and distinguished, capable of unbiased and impersonal judgment, conservative, and (as it seems to us) somewhat over-extends his effort to make the case for the negative. All that we comment on here, however, is his confessed scepticism as to whether the survival problem can be solved at all, in our present state of knowledge.

In his opinion, it is probable that the question has not yet been correctly stated. It is likely that 500 years from now, all of our present arguments, both for and against, will seem childish and superficial. The reason for this is simply that we have no clear-cut meaning for the word personality, no "frame of reference", and consequently cannot use the word survive intelligently. Or, whatever it is that survives may or may not be a personality, according to the meaning we attach to that term -- which, however, has no present scientific definition.

So much for Dr. Murphy's personal attitude. Now, if any man believes an issue cannot be formulated, then for him it is no issue at all, and no data of any kind can be called evidence. The word survival, meaning personality-survival, should in

such case be ruled out of psychic research and parapsychology. We should go on collecting data, and trying to find out what personality means, and perhaps by the 25th century may have something intelligent to say about post-mortem existence.

It seems clear enough that whenever we have a correct concept of personality, the question of survival will be implicit in it and be answered by it. The problem is single and not two-fold. And as our knowledge of personality increases, perhaps we may be allowed a doctrine of probabilities -- which is about all that even the physical sciences can boast of, in their present status.

Meanwhile, we wonder if Earnest Inquirer can be allowed to say, "I don't know just how to define a personality, but whatever my friend John Doe was in this life, he appears to be the same in his invisible existence." That means that his character and tastes and memory and personal peculiarities seem to be substantially intact, and so the E. I. infers that "he survives." To us, that does not beg the question, because as we read the evidence we do have that much to go on -- that John Doe is just about the same as he used to be.

We do not reflect at all upon Dr. Murphy's attitude or distinguished abilities, nor overlook the depth of our ignorance and the innumerable riddles of psychic investigations. But it is worth while, in this year of our Lord 1945, to take thoughtful note of the Murphian attitude, which is no doubt deeply significant -- though just what it signifies may be left for the gentle reader to decide.

* * *

[12]

** SIMPLE SIMON HEARS THINGS **

We may be simple-minded, but we still maintain that there are occasions, even in psychical investigations, where common sense, sanity and the evidence of one's eyes and ears are very convincing indeed, and even take precedence over the inventions of the sceptic who wasn't there.

We recall, as an example of this, almost our first experience with trumpet voice. Ordinary room, full daylight, one aluminum trumpet, one fat elderly medium, our-self with one ear at the trumpet end. The medium stands as far away as

possible, while yet touching the trumpet with one finger. Immediately, there's a voice, indubitably within the aluminum cone. If the speaker had his head inside it, the locus could not be more apparent. A heavy, masculine voice, nobody I know.

But I'm trying to get in touch with Dr W., a former friend, "passed over" some 20 years ago -- and without giving his name, if possible, at least audibly, and that makes a lot of trouble. Four or five different voices come on, in succession, very distinct and characteristic; whenever there's a change from one to the next, there's a click like hanging up a telephone receiver.

Finally I gave the name of Dr. W., then there's an instant answer. "Is this Dr W?" -- "Yes, this is W. What is it?" Well, now, it so happens that my deceased friend had a voice and manner so characteristic that no one could mistake them; this communicator whoever he was, was a liar supreme; if he was Dr. W., I'm Diodorus Siculus. So, from one point of view (a very narrow one) the experiment came to nothing.

But what about this succession of distinctive voices, right next to my ear and inside the cone? There's the medium, of course, about 6 feet away; her lips and throat do not show the least motion; if this was "ventriloquism", she was the world's best.

But nobody who knows anything worth saying about the possibilities of ventriloquism would give that notion a second thought. The full tone and power of the voices, their rapid and easy change, their personalized quality, their perfect localization within the trumpet -- no, dear credulous sceptic, the ventriloquism idea won't work. Ask some professional V. about that.

There's enough material for a fair-sized book on this phenomenon, and we humbly submit that we have read it with close attention. We know that the voice is said by communicators to be produced in various ways, sometimes by materialization of a vocal apparatus, sometimes by either a partial or full use of the psychic throat organs; and we know about taping the medium's lips, or having her hold a pressure tube in her mouth and other checks and tests. We know about Coover's tangled experiments at Stanford (he got the voices but didn't believe it), and have seen some very crude and impudent fraud, often easy enough in a dark seance . . . But if anybody, after carefully allowing for <u>every</u> fact herein mentioned, can give us a "natural" or normal explanation, we'll welcome him like a lost brother.

The impersonator, that brazen-voiced liar, raises other questions. One can usually deal with the rascality of here-living folk, but this business of impersonation makes endless trouble and requires special techniques; each case has to be handled on its merits (if any). But to return to our text. We admit that this was a private experiment, no witnesses, no apparatus, no recordings, electrical controls or what-have-you. There was only a medium, and a trumpet, and voices coming out of it. But for all that, you and you could do the same thing, get the same results in all essentials with the same medium. So it's not peculiar, non-repeatable, non-verifiable as a phenomenon, hence not outside the purview of scientific observation at all. But don't imagine on that account, that you're going to get any scientists-of-standing to pay attention to it, or psychiatrist, psychologist or smart M.D. That is, except for one in a thousand, maybe.

SIMPLE SIMON HEARS THINGS (contd:) [13]

That's because it's outlawed from the start. It just can't happen, but if it does there's something wrong somewhere. Somebody's a liar, or a fool, or just simple-minded. Also, there's a little matter of professional reputation to be considered, plus practise, plus bread 'n butter and $10,000 incomes. But all that is a very old story indeed, to every psychic research men in the world.

Our own conclusions maybe don't go as far as our spiritualist friends would like, arguing from this as an isolated phenomenon and as a single instance of it. We simply say that in the whole field of psychology there isn't a single "normal" explanation worth listening to; and that the spiritualists have one which makes sense as far as it goes. We mean, that some intelligent human-like beings, invisible to us, were doing the talking.

When we consider the matter in its relations, that is, in connection with the whole field of spiritistic (or psychic or parasychological) phenomena, a whole library of literature (narrative, critical, experimental, good, bad and indifferent) than our humble inference takes on added strength. There is one principle at least we should never lose sight of; the EVIDENCE FOR SPIRITISM IS CUMULATIVE, the experimentum crucis probably impossible.

* * * * *

EGON FRIEDELL:

Even within the frame of our decaying forms of apperception -- scientific experiment and rational syllogistic -- it can be proved that the unreal soul is the true reality.

We allude, of course, to the facts of para- or meta-psychology, disputed now only by ignorant professors and hide-bound free-thinkers (the semi-educated world, that is). These facts shared the same fate in their day as the phenomena of hypnosis, which on its discovery was likewise denounced as impudent swindling, blind self-deception, silly fashion, pretentiousness and childishness; whereas today it already comes under the criminal code -- and what higher recognition could there be? The most important phenomena in this domain are:

Telepathy . . . Second Sight . . . Psychoscopy, which is the capacity to give the origin, one might say the biography of unknown objects; Telekinesis . . . Apport . . . Levitation . . . Materialization and Ghost phenomena.

All these are mere provisional terms, none of them calling for explanation any more than the expressions attraction and induction in physics . . . .

History of European Culture.
Vol. iii p. 479

Experimental psychology and experimental physics arrive at the same result. The Soul is super-real, matter is sub-real. Simultaneously, however, there appears a **FAINT GLEAM OF LIGHT FROM THE OTHER SIDE . . .**

THE NEXT CHAPTER OF EUROPEAN CULTURAL HISTORY WILL BE THE HISTORY OF THIS LIGHT.

Closing paragraphs, vol. iii
(Italics by us)

A WORD TO OUR SPIRITUALIST FRIENDS:

This Bulletin is being received very favorably by a considerable number of spiritualists, who are not primarily interested in psychical research work. And we believe that there are many well-informed and intelligent spiritualists who can understand the value of a critical and factual approach.

We distinguish somewhat, for convenience, between spiritism and spiritualism. The latter is the religious aspect and interpretation of a wide range of super-normal happenings. The editor is sympathetic with spiritism-as-religion, but this Round Robin is concerned with a different and non-religious standpoint.

For many years most spiritualists regarded every psychic research man as an enemy, bent on persecution and destruction only. Today, however, the great majority of research men thru out the world either accept the basic ideas (of survival and communication), or are extremely sympathetic to them. The peculiarity of spiritualism is that it claims a foundation in facts - - that is, in verifiable experience which has only one intelligible explanation - - and not wholly in tradition, authority, and mystical revelation. It cannot, therefore, neglect a single fact derived from scientific investigation.

Small as our publication is, we bespeak for it the sympathy and cooperation of intelligent spiritualists. And all students of things occult accept certain phenomena, and the essential nature of them, and have certain ideals in common. Or we can at least assume that every honest student wants to know the TRUTH at any cost -- and to make it accessible, understandable and verifiable, in the interests of human knowledge and welfare.

We would like to print instructive instances of spiritistic happenings, and we solicit them from our readers. But they should be distinctive in nature, and observed under such conditions that "normal" explanations are ruled out, and carefully and factually reported, and --of necessity-- brief. To spread the knowledge of such events is a good and useful work, and basic to the cause of honest inquiry.

* * *

LAST WORDS FOR APRIL

THANKS TO EVERYONE CONCERNED for various new subscriptions, contributions, names and addresses. Six issues for a dollar, for the present at any rate.

* * *

And **WE WANT CLIPS** of the Tares and Thistles variety -- the kind of thing CORONET used to print for its Dark File, and which Charles Fort and his collaborators (genuflection here!) collected by the book-full, to the amusement, contempt, annoyance, and downright rage of **ORTHODOXY**, both "scientific" and "religious". (Quotes, because we reverence both Science and Religion, sub aspectu spiritus Veritatis). -If or when you send them in, your clips, please be sure to give name and date of publication.

* * *

We have not once referred, in this issue, to Aprile with her soures sote and feel that we have acquired merit.

* * *

References

1. Merrell-Wolfe, Franklin. *Pathways Through to Space*. New York: Rich. R. Smith, 1944. Print.
2. Kilner, Walter J. *The Human Atmosphere; or, The Aura Made Visible by the Aid of Chemical Screens*. New York: Rebman Company, 1911. Print. [Digital (PDF): <https://archive.org/details/humanatmosphere00kilngoog (https://archive.org/details/humanatmosphere00kilngoog) >]
3. Khun, de P.B. *Dead Men Do Tell Tales*. New York: Creative Age Press, 1942. Print.
4. Bernard, Theos. *Haṭha yoga: the report of a personal experience*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1944. Print. [Digital (PDF):

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/97360854/Theos-Bernard-Hatha-Yoga (http://www.scribd.com/doc/97360854/Theos-Bernard-Hatha-Yoga) >]

5. Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research. 39 (April 1945): np. Print. [May be available from aspr.com (http://www.aspr.com/) .]
6. Friedell, Egon, and Charles Francis Atkinson. *A cultural history of the modern age: the crisis of the European soul from the Black Death to the World War*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1930. Print.

Previous Issue - March 1945 (../../01/n02/index.html) [<<]

[Contents (index.html#TOC)]

[>>] Next Issue - May 1945 (../../01/n04/index.html)

Borderland Sciences Research Foundation
P.O. Box 6250 • Eureka, CA, USA • 95502
+1 (707) 497-6911 • borderlandsciences.org (https://borderlandsciences.org/)

(https://borderlandsciences.org/)